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C O N F I D E N T I A L ABUJA 002551

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

STATE FOR INR/AA, INR/B

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/27/2016  
TAGS: [PINR](#) [NI](#)  
SUBJECT: REPORTING ON HEALTH OF AFRICAN LEADERS - OLUSEGUN  
OBASANJO

REF: STATE 150331

Classified By: Ambassador John Campbell for Reason 1.4 (d).

(C) Post furnishes keyed-in responses below on President of  
Nigeria, Olusegun A. Obasanjo. This cable is classified  
CONFIDENTIAL throughout.

SIPDIS

[1](#)1. BACKGROUND

- a. Age: Although officially reported to be in his late 60s, sources close to him strongly contend that he is in his mid-70s.
- b. How old does he look: As much as 5 years older than reported age
- c. Height/Weight: Average; 5'10"/170 lbs.
- d. Left or right-handed: Right

[1](#)2. HEALTH

- a. General: Questionable. Although he maintains an active lifestyle, regularly playing squash, whispers of diabetes and fainting spells have surfaced over the past year.
- b. Stamina: Good
- c. Posture/Gait: Erect
- d. Tremors: None
- e. Eyes, ears, face, neck, skin, breathing: Normal
- f. Extremities: Swelling observed on feet/ankles

[1](#)3. HABITS (OBSERVED)

- a. Diet: Eats sparingly
- b. Tobacco, Alcohol: None
- c. Personal hygiene: Normal
- d. Known medications: None

[1](#)4. SPEECH

- a. Organization: Varies, can be incoherent/illogical at times
- b. Impediment: Hoarseness at times
- c. Rate: Normal
- d. English: Fluent
- e. Translator used: None
- f. Articulate: Yes

[1](#)5. MENTAL STATE

- a. Manner: Capable of being charming, warm, gruff, and cold; highly aloof; and maintains a forced sense of humor
- b. Emotions: Varied, though appropriate to situation; displays moodiness, irritability, and anger, however, seldom appears depressed or anxious
- c. Reaction to stress: Calm
- d. Intellect: Strong alertness, comprehension, and focus
- e. Relations with family, friends: Reported to have fathered 21-23 children by 6 different women; family interaction

accords with traditional Yoruba practice; also reputed to "use people" and "discard them".

f. Judgment: Sound, though capable of being impulsive

g. Unusual behavior: Some suspiciousness, not paranoia

#### ¶6. MEMORY

a. Recall of questions asked: Good

b. Repeats self in same conversation: No

c. Loses train of thought: No

d. Difficulty with names/in naming objects: No

#### ¶7. LEADERSHIP

a. Major biases or dislikes: As a former military dictator, his style is authoritarian. He eschews insubordination and disobedience, adhering to a worldview founded on both uncompromising evangelical Christianity and Yoruba cultural traditionalism (which he views as compatible).

b. Flexibility: Stubborn and unyielding

c. "Hot Buttons": Always conscious of position as a Statesman and "world leader"; resents being lectured to by those he considers beneath him, i.e. women, youth, laymen.

d. Level of confidence/Poise: High

e. Admits mistakes: With great difficulty

f. People he admires: G.W. Bush, Nelson Mandela, Tony Blair; maintains close, personal relationships with each of them and considers them "helpful" in achieving his goals.

g. Attitude toward U.S.: Fundamentally favorable; admires American power and is impressed by American evangelical zeal; in agreement with us on African regional issues.

CAMPBELL